

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Behavioral Health	(2) MEETING DATE 9/17/2013	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director 781-5500	
(4) SUBJECT Request to approve a resolution amending the Position Allocation List for Fund Center 166—Behavioral Health to delete two vacant positions totaling 1.50 FTE (one half-time Drug & Alcohol Specialist and one Mental Health Supervising Nurse) and add four positions totaling 3.50 FTE (one half time Mental Health Therapist, one Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and two Mental Health Program Supervisors).			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board approve a resolution amending the Position Allocation List for Fund Center 166—Behavioral Health to delete two vacant positions totaling 1.50 FTE (one half-time Drug & Alcohol Specialist and one Mental Health Supervising Nurse) and add four positions totaling 3.50 FTE (one half time Mental Health Therapist, one Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and two Mental Health Program Supervisors).			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) Various	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ____ ) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ____ )			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR)  N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A    Date: _____	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Geoff O'Quest, Administrative Analyst			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts -			

# County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director

DATE: 9/17/2013

SUBJECT: Request to approve a resolution amending the Position Allocation List for Fund Center 166—Behavioral Health to delete two vacant positions totaling 1.50 FTE (one half-time Drug & Alcohol Specialist and one Mental Health Supervising Nurse) and add four positions totaling 3.50 FTE (one half time Mental Health Therapist, one Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and two Mental Health Program Supervisors).

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board approve a resolution amending the Position Allocation List for Fund Center 166—Behavioral Health to delete two positions totaling 1.50 FTE (one half-time Drug & Alcohol Specialist and one Mental Health Supervising Nurse) and add four positions totaling 3.50 FTE (one half time Mental Health Therapist, one Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and two Mental Health Program Supervisors).

## **DISCUSSION**

The staffing changes being recommended can be broken down into three areas. Each of the three is summarized below:

### Delete a vacant 0.50 Drug & Alcohol Specialist and Replace with 0.50 FTE Mental Health (MH) Therapist

This half-time position's assignment, Young Adult Counseling, is a Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funded early intervention program that has been held by a Drug & Alcohol Specialist since it was originally designed to be an extension of school-based counseling for high school graduates and young adults without institutional counseling (i.e. schools, juvenile justice, etc.). For the past couple of years the department has seen the need for more mental health intervention and access to outpatient services with the participants. A 0.50 FTE Drug & Alcohol Specialist position is currently vacant. The Human Resources Department has reviewed the assigned duties and concurs that they are more appropriately performed by a Mental Health Therapist III/IV. The funding for position is wholly in MHSA—there is no General Fund support involved.

### Add 1.0 FTE MH Nurse Practitioner

For many years the Health Agency has struggled to recruit and retain a full complement of Staff Psychiatrist positions. This has forced reliance on an inappropriately high number of hours of traveling, or "locum tenens", psychiatrists. In the current fiscal year, the department is budgeted for the anticipated use of up to 4,200 hours of locum tenens service at a cost of approximately \$700,000. Several years ago a Mental Health Nurse Practitioner position was created to work under the direction of Dr. Llano, our Medical Director, replacing an equivalent number of psychiatrist hours. The arrangement has proven to be both medically appropriate and cost effective. At this time, staff is recommending that another FTE of locum tenens hours (approximately 1,200 through the balance of the year) be "converted" to creation of a second MH Nurse Practitioner position. Deletion of the expensive locum tenens psychiatrist hours (totaling approximately \$210,000 of expense) will pay for the MH Nurse Practitioner (at a cost approximately \$115,000) and leave savings to pay for the second MH Program Supervisor addressed below.

### Delete a vacant 1.0 FTE MH Supervising Nurse and add 2.0 FTE MH Program Supervisor

Currently, a single MH Supervising Nurse position is charged with the day to day supervision of the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF). The PHF operates 24 hours a day, every day of the year, and is staffed by 21.50 FTE of regular positions and temporary help staff equivalent to another 16.75 FTE. This is too many staff for one supervisor, and has been a growing concern to management. The incumbent MH Supervising Nurse recently resigned her position to take a less demanding position elsewhere in the Agency. The vacancy prompted an analysis of staffing options, and the following recommendation took shape. Replacing the vacant MH Supervising Nurse position with a MH Program Supervisor will broaden the qualifications required, hopefully leading to a deeper candidate pool. It will also reduce salary and benefit costs by approximately \$30,000 annually. The savings, together with the extra savings from the conversion of locum tenens psychiatrist hours to a MH Nurse Practitioner position, will allow the creation of a second MH Program Supervisor to share the responsibility to supervise the PHF staff. A second supervisory position on the PHF will address the inappropriate span of control (with a single supervisor over 40 subordinate employees), and allow a second supervisor to be physically present on the PHF. It is anticipated that one will work days and the second will work PM or swing shifts.

### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT**

Human Resources has reviewed and concurs with the proposed changes.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

FY 2013-14 expenditures associated with the conversion of the following positions:

Delete	0.50 FTE	Drug/Alcohol Specialist II (vacant)	(\$35,000)	MHSA
Add	0.50 FTE	Mental Health Therapist IV	\$37,000	MHSA

MHSA program revenue absorbs the minimal increase associated with the adjustment.

Delete	1.0 FTE	MH Supervising Nurse (vacant)	(\$120,000)	PHF
Add	1.0 FTE	MH Program Supervisor	\$89,000	PHF
Decrease	1200 hours	Locum tenen contract hours	(\$210,000)	PHF
Add	1.0 FTE	MH Nurse Practitioner	\$115,000	PHF
Add	1.0 FTE	MH Program Supervisor	\$89,000	PHF

The financial characteristics of replacing locum tenens psychiatrist hours with a MH Nurse Practitioner, and replacing one MH Supervising Nurse position with two MH Program Supervisor positions net out total savings of \$35,000.

### **RESULTS**

There are three primary components to the recommended staffing changes.

The first change switches out a vacant half time Drug & Alcohol Specialist position for a half time Mental Health Therapist position. The results is to more properly classify the half time MHSA-funded Young Adult Counseling position, allowing the department to more appropriately meet the need for more mental health intervention and access to outpatient services for the program's participants. The right mix of staff capabilities will increase the likelihood of this early intervention program meeting its stated results.

The second change reduces our use of expensive and temporary locum tenens psychiatrist hours and utilizes the savings to add a MH Nurse Practitioner position. This change will increase the level of stability in our staffing plan while substantially reducing costs.

The third change replaces one vacant MH Supervising Nurse position with two MH Program Supervisor positions, funded in part with the savings resulting from the switch from locum tenens psychiatrist hours to MH Nurse Practitioner hours. The change from MH Supervising Nurse to MH Program Supervisor will broaden and hopefully deepen the pool of qualified candidates to fill this vacant and very important position. The change from one supervisory position on the PHF to two will allow a more appropriate ratio of supervisor to line staff, resulting in better supervision, improved quality assurance and staff training, and, ultimately, improved patient outcomes.

Each of these changes is consistent with the department's mission and should help achieve the County's vision of a safe and healthy community.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. FC 166 Behavioral Health PAL Resolution